

REMARKS

The final Office Action dated May 13, 2004 has been received and carefully considered. The above amendments and following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the full features of former claim 8, which has now been canceled. Claims 1-4, 6, 9 and 10 are presented for reconsideration.

Since the amendments merely involve the incorporation of subject matter from a dependent claim, the amendments do not raise new issues requiring further consideration or search. Therefore, entry and consideration of the amendments is both proper and required.

More specifically, as shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 of the present specification, a hole 80 having a rectangular cross section, which penetrates downwardly from the opening 78, is formed through the slider 18. Moreover, as discussed in the specification, a ball return tube (not shown) may be installed to the ball screw nut 30 and accommodated in the hole 80. Therefore, when the hole 80 accommodates such a return tube, it is possible to reduce the dimension of the slider 18 in the height direction. See, page 8, lines 1-9, of the present specification.

Claims 1-4, 6 and 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamada (U.S. Patent No. 6,240,796) in view of Nagai et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,747,896).

It is respectfully submitted that the claimed features are not shown or suggested in the cited prior art.

Among the references cited in the rejection, neither Yamada nor Nagai et al. ('896) shows a hole provided in an opening of the slider. In particular, referring to FIG. 4 of Nagai et al. ('896), although the holder block 148 includes an opening 150 having an upwardly oriented U-shaped cross section, there is no hole whatsoever provided in the opening 150, which penetrates from the opening to the frame, as currently claimed. Similarly, the opening 16 provided in the casing 40 of the slider 3 in Yamada (see FIG. 3) does not have a hole that penetrates from the opening to the frame.

Accordingly, since neither of the cited references provides any suggestion for the claimed hole, which penetrates from a U-shaped opening through to the frame of an actuator, it is respectfully submitted that the references, even in combination, cannot render obvious the claimed subject matter. Moreover, the Examiner has provided no explanation in the Office Action of his basis for rejecting the features of former claim 8.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the features recited in the amended independent claim would not have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time the invention was made. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections, and allowance of claims 1-4, 6, 9 and 10, is hereby respectfully requested.

No fees are due. Notwithstanding, should it be deemed that fees, or deficiencies in fees, are required in connection with this or any accompanying communication, such amounts may be charged to the Attorney's Deposit Account No. 07-2519.

Respectfully submitted,



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